

ISB Briefing Paper on the Small Agency Information Technology (IT) Initiative

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Description

At the request of the Office of Financial Management (OFM), the Department of Information Services (DIS) began researching the IT needs of small agencies, boards, and commissions in October of 2000. As a result of the study, high degree of interest from the executive branch, and feedback from small agencies, boards, and commissions, OFM created the Small Agency Information Technology Initiative.

The Initiative has achieved significant milestones working in a collaborative effort among OFM, the Department of General Administration (GA), Helen Howell, Deputy Chief of Staff to the Governor, and small agency cabinet members. OFM and the Governor have supported the initiative by providing \$55,000 from the Governor's Emergency FY02 Fund and have committed to include funding in the Governor's budget for 03-05 Biennium.

The Initiative is expected to produce the following benefits:

- increased access to state services,
- access to Washington's statewide web applications via the Inter/intranet,
- increased use of shared hardware/software,
- providing a more secure environment for small agencies to operate,
- providing the ability to interact with other state agencies, and
- providing the ability to implement digital government initiatives.

Background

The Small Agency IT Initiative was undertaken with the goal of connecting as many small state agencies as possible to the State Governmental Network (SGN) and to procure new hardware and software for those agencies requiring it.

The following four strategies are proposed to connect small agencies to the SGN infrastructure. The SGN will provide a secure network environment that will allow small agencies to conduct business on-line with state, local, and federal agencies and to communicate with their constituencies.

1. Co-locate a number of small agencies within a single or multiple office parks.
2. Develop partnerships where a larger agency hosts a smaller agency within the larger agency's facility.
3. Co-locate a smaller agency within a local government or federal facility.
4. Where co-location is not feasible, develop funding strategies to connect small agencies to the SGN and procure up-to-date hardware/software.

Status

- Small Agency IT Initiative Committee created (OFM, DIS, GA) in November 2001.
- DIS received Governor's Emergency Fund allocation of \$55,000 to provide IT infrastructure enhancement for small agencies.

- DIS provided surplus equipment to School for the Deaf, Services for the Blind, Marine Employees' Commission, Pollution Liability Insurance Program, and Western Washington Growth Board.
- Redistricting Commission provided surplus equipment to Legislature and School for the Deaf, Marine Employees' Commission, and Western Washington Growth Board.
- Eastern Washington Growth Board is in the process of co-locating with Labor and Industries in Yakima.
- Asian American Affairs, Hispanic affairs, African American Affairs, and Salary Commission are in the process of co-locating in Olympia.
- A review of the GA Capital Plan for GA Building renovation to accommodate small agency co-location study is being undertaken.
- DIS presented training to 40 small and mid-size agencies on the annual requirement to complete IT Portfolios, Disaster Recovery/Business Resumption Plans, and IT Security Plans.
- DIS negotiated new Desktop Support/Maintenance Master Contract for small agencies.
- DIS is in the process of finalizing a case study of the Department of Ecology Co-location with state and federal agencies.
- DIS is developing a business plan to provide services to the small agencies. The plan may serve as a model to replicate for providing outreach to small local government jurisdictions.

Recommendation

OFM, DIS, and GA should continue to develop and coordinate a plan to maximize state investments in IT and facilities for small agencies, boards, and commissions.